AARP is fighting to protect vulnerable seniors in nursing homes, assisted living and other long-term care facilities from sickness, neglect and isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Fighting for Nursing Homes Residents and Their Families

AARP is serving on a task force or working group.
AARP is fighting to protect vulnerable seniors in nursing homes, assisted living and other long-term care facilities from sickness, neglect and isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic. Here are some of the ways how:

**Family Communication:** Nursing homes, assisted living and long-term care facilities must have a plan in place to communicate regularly with families about the status of their loved ones, and the facility.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** All nursing homes, assisted living and long-term care facilities should have systems in place to prevent infections during this pandemic, including supplying personal protective equipment like masks, face shields, gloves and gowns for staff.

**Reporting Cases:** All nursing homes, assisted living and long-term care facilities should immediately report residents and staff infected with COVID-19 to health officials, residents, families and the public. Transparency in these facilities is paramount to making informed decisions during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Staffing:** All nursing homes, assisted living and long-term care facilities should have plans in place to provide ongoing, uninterrupted care for residents when it comes to the assistance they count on daily—like help with bathing and dressing, getting out of bed, going to the bathroom, meals and feeding, taking their medicine, and more.

**Testing:** States should prioritize access to testing for persons living and those working in nursing homes, assisted living and long-term care facilities.

**Transfers/Discharges:** Vulnerable residents have the right to return to their nursing home, assisted living or long-term care residence after a hospitalization or leaving the facility for a short period. Nursing homes, assisted living and long-term care facilities should have a plan in place to make this possible. Additionally, there should be no involuntary discharges or transfers from nursing homes, assisted living, or other long-term care facilities during the coronavirus emergency, except as necessary under CMS guidance.

**Virtual Visitation:** All nursing homes, assisted living and long-term care facilities should have a system in place to connect seniors with their loved ones virtually, on a regular basis, such as such as phone and video chat options and communication including FaceTime, Skype and Zoom.

**Other:** Additional actions to support seniors in nursing homes, assisted living and long-term care facilities and their families.

- **New Hampshire:** Residents of nursing homes, assisted living, and other long-term care facilities should have access to the Ombudsman program.
- **New Jersey, Utah:** In the event a family member is inappropriately denied visitation, states should ensure that there is a hotline established for families to seek assistance and resolution.
- **Washington:** The increased Federal Medical Assistance Percentages rate from the CARES Act for long-term care should apply to long-term care facilities.
- **North Carolina:** Adult protective services (APS) should continue to investigate or follow up on pending cases, whether they are in the community or in a long-term care setting.
- **Minnesota:** Ensuring that compassionate care is clearly defined to avoid confusion for families and facilities.